



**Royal
Pharmaceutical
Society**
of Great Britain



Service Continuity planning A Guide for Community Pharmacists England, Wales and Scotland

Although this guide is aimed primarily at community pharmacists, the principles will be appropriate to practice within secondary care. However, most NHS organisations will have their own operational policies in place.

This guidance focuses on service continuity planning within each individual pharmacy. However, community pharmacy contractors need to take into consideration the wider picture within their locality i.e. relocation to other premises, Primary Care Organisation (PCO) plans, working with other contractors etc.

This guidance is intentionally generic. Individual pharmacies will need to tailor this guidance to their own exact requirements in order for it to be of any value.

What is continuity planning?

Defined as procedures planned to prevent and prepare for emergencies, your response during the experience and the action required to recover your business from the situation that will affect your ability to operate and function effectively.

Why is business continuity planning important?

An emergency can result in a wide range of serious repercussions that could mean a temporary loss of your ability to operate as a business, incurring considerable and immediate costs, and longer-term damage. There may also be potential infringement of regulations or legal liabilities. Good service continuity and recovery planning can reduce these risks significantly.

What risks should be planned for?

Fire and flood are the most likely events to affect property, but power, water and gas supply failure are also events that could have a serious impact on your business. Access to your pharmacy could be denied as a result of an incident in the neighbourhood. Theft, the failure of your equipment or supply issues may also be potentially serious. A risk analysis of your local situation needs to be completed to highlight all areas of concern. In certain geographical areas, large-scale emergency planning procedures may already be in place e.g. if there is a higher risk of terrorist activity. Also adverse weather conditions

may affect staff's ability to work, or get to work. Also, flood / fire from domestic properties / other businesses in the vicinity may also affect the pharmacy.

Public disorders or terrorism attacks may affect a much wider area than just an individual pharmacy. The pharmacy may be a casualty, but it could also be a main player in events. Large-scale illnesses such as pandemic flu will also have an impact on the operation of the pharmacy and this should be taken into account in local PCO planning

What should a service continuity plan include?

A service continuity plan can consist of a series of several independent, but related, smaller plans. One of the most important aspects of a service continuity plan is the delegation of roles and responsibilities. Everyone needs to be sure what he or she is doing in the event of emergency. As part of the planning process, every emergency can be broken down into three distinct phases: before, during and after.

The '**before phase**' corresponds to everyday routine operations and can be further subdivided into two types of plan: preventive and preparedness. Preventive plans identify the actions required to prevent most emergencies and include recommendations such as the improvement of maintenance and the upgrading of security. Preparedness plans are designed to ensure that any emergency identified can be managed. Recommended actions could include the identification of important items and the training of staff to enable them to respond appropriately in a variety of emergency situations. Recommendations identified in both the preventative and preparedness plan do not necessarily have to have a capital cost attached to them e.g. regular staff security briefings, out of hours security drills etc.

In the '**during phase**' a response to the emergency must be made. The effectiveness of the response to the emergency is governed by the thoroughness of the preparedness plan.

In the '**after phase**' recovery plans are implemented. Due to the unique nature of every emergency, recovery plans can never be formulated in detail. For example, for emergencies involving water damage the water can originate from a variety of sources including from extinguishing a fire, from a burst water pipe, from a leaking roof, a blocked drain, or from weather damage. Consequently, all key personnel should be familiar with salvage methods for wet materials.

A service continuity plan should describe how the pharmacy intends to rapidly reinstate its critical operations, infrastructure, stores and equipment from a range of situations to minimise the impact of any emergency. It should specify necessary resources, key contact lists and clear procedures that will be required to be followed by any member of staff in these circumstances.

If a pharmacy cannot provide services and / or has to shut during their contracted hours the Primary Care Organisation (PCO) should be informed. As a matter of good practice the RPSGB should also be informed.

Also, if a pharmacy needs to relocate in order to ensure continuity of services, this relocation must be notified to the RPSGB. Any retail pharmacy site from which the pharmacist supplies restricted medicines must be registered with the RPSGB, otherwise the pharmacist will be committing a criminal offence. Again, the PCO should be involved in this process at the outset.

The following checklists aim to help you avoid an emergency situation occurring in the first place, to assist you in minimising the impact of such an event and recover should such an emergency arise.

1. Service impact analysis

This checklist is not comprehensive, but aims to provide pointers to aid you in the preparation of your service impact assessment, identifying the critical operations and resources you need to provide your services. For each of them in turn consider the impact of losing that resource. In your service continuity plan you will need to use this analysis to plan how to recover quickly and efficiently from each of these impacts.

Critical pharmacy resources
<p><i>Access to patient medication records / computers</i> Assess the impact of losing this information. Could you operate without it? If not, it must be included as a critical resource in this analysis. Then later, when developing your business continuity plan, you will need to check how quickly you can access your back up system. Check how quickly you could acquire the equipment you would need – such as a PC, a printer and a server. Consider how you could manually record patient details, dispensing records, write labels and record interventions etc. Consider preparing templates for such an eventuality. Planning should also consider how electronic records are updated following reinstatement of the required resource. It is important you speak to your IT systems supplier to gauge what support they can offer. Make sure back ups are carried out regularly, that back up media such as CD-ROMs are rotated regularly and that back-ups are stored off site. Consider the impact on the ability to continue to provide access to dispensing, OTC and Direct Supply services.</p>
<p><i>Staff</i> Consider the critical minimum members and skills of your staff needed to run the business.</p>
<p><i>Access to other key pharmacy information such as financial records</i> Consider how invoices are processed, whether accounts are manual or electronic and what back up systems you have in place e.g. off-line facilities for credit card handling.</p>
<p><i>Medicines</i> Assess the implications of not being able to access medicines stored within the pharmacy and / or supplies from wholesalers. Assess impact of emergency on the integrity of medicines - are they likely to have been damaged in any way e.g. from smoke, heat, water ?</p>
<p><i>Medical equipment</i> If you carry out diagnostic testing services you will need access to reliable means for the safe disposal of used materials and other equipment. Assess whether this service is critical to the business or whether it can be suspended until the service is fully functional again.</p>
<p><i>Other equipment</i> If you are a pharmacist prescriber you will need access to your prescription pads, or be able to obtain / order new ones quickly. Consider any critical operations or resources needed for other services that the pharmacy provides. Can you dispose of unwanted medicines? How will you dispose of damaged stock?</p>

<p>Buildings</p>
<p><i>Alternative interim locations from which to run a pharmacy</i> Is there a suitable local building that could be used in an emergency? Consider reciprocal arrangements with neighbouring pharmacies. What essential supplies and equipment are required to allow you to continue to function? Are you familiar with the procedures that require to be followed to approve such a temporary relocation?</p>
<p><i>Loss of mains electricity supply</i> Consider how long you could continue to practice without electricity before it became an emergency. Do you own a generator or can one be hired or borrowed in such circumstances? How would you dispense and supply medicines and keep necessary records? How would you keep records of medicines supplied, particularly if this is linked to a reordering facility? How long can medicines be safely kept in refrigerators? Do you have max/min thermometers? Can suppliers provide fast response interim solutions?</p>
<p><i>Loss of gas supply</i> Consider how long your pharmacy can function before it becomes an emergency. Is your heating system reliant on gas supply? Can other types of heating be used as an interim measure? Are temporary heaters safe and can they be positioned safely to avoid becoming a hazard? Check whether suppliers can provide fast response interim solutions for you.</p>
<p><i>Loss of water supply</i> Consider how long you could practice without access to running water before it became an emergency. How will you make up medicines that require reconstitution with water? Can the PCO ensure you get paid for reconstituting mixtures with sterile water? Do you need to be able to wash hands etc? Check whether suppliers can provide fast response interim solutions for you.</p>
<p><i>Suppliers</i> Consider: IT software and hardware providers Drug suppliers Medical equipment suppliers Other products suppliers</p>

2. Emergency avoidance checklist

This self-assessment checklist aims to highlight areas that the pharmacy may wish to act on to minimise the risk of an emergency occurring.

End of day inspections	Yes	No	Need to check
Do you make sure that all relevant appliances are switched off?			
Do you check that all cabinets, doors and windows are shut and locked?			
Are all computer systems backups completed and have they been taken off site?			
Does anything look out of place either in the dispensary or on the shop floor and is there clear access to all fire doors?			
Are alarms in good working order and maintained regularly?			
Are any flammable liquids or chemicals stored securely?			
Are all drugs stored appropriately? e.g. Controlled drugs in CD cabinet including those awaiting collection.			
Fire			
Do you have fire safety procedures in place?			
Do you have regular fire safety inspections?			
Do you have smoke alarms, are they tested regularly and the batteries changed when required?			
Do you have carbon monoxide monitors?			
Are the fire exits clearly marked and not blocked?			
Do you have an evacuation procedure for your building(s)?			
Do you have primary and secondary evacuation routes?			
Do you have a fire folder containing staff lists and a plan of your building(s)?			
Are staff trained in fire handling procedures and aware of their role should a fire occur?			
Are pharmacy evacuations held with staff appraised of timings and any learning needs identified?			
Are your staff nominated to tasks in the event of a fire? e.g. is someone nominated to grab the fire folder and call the role?			
Do you regularly practice fire drills and know how to evacuate customers from the pharmacy?			
Do you have equipment checked regularly? – this should be part of a contract. Ensure all records of checks are kept and are up to date.			
Personnel			
Do you maintain an up to date staff list (including temporary staff)?			
Do you maintain an up to date list of staff next of kin contact numbers (including temporary staff)?			
Have staff been trained in what action to take in the event of a disaster? Ensure you record who is trained and when the training occurred. Don't forget refresher training.			
Have staff been given nominated roles in the event of a disaster?			
Do staff have access to a functional mobile phone programmed with essential contact numbers?			
Are locum staff aware or have access to the emergency plan?			
Do you know who will be in charge in the event of a disaster? Is			

there a member of staff who lives near the premises who can be called upon in an emergency? Is there an 'emergency' locum list of people who can provide short-term / short-notice cover?			
Do the police have an up to date keyholder list for the pharmacy?			
Security			
Do you have a security policy?			
Do you check that all cabinets, doors, windows and shutters are locked?			
Is there a security system installed and do the appropriate staff know how to use it?			
Is someone responsible for checking that it is activated every evening?			
Is someone responsible for testing it regularly?			
Do you give training to your staff on security issues? Is there a policy in place to ensure there is more than one person present when locking up?			
Are contact numbers for engineers available if they need to be called out?			
Do you check references fully (including temporary staff)?			
Do you regularly check the locks on your cabinets, windows and doors?			
Are contact numbers for police services available and has a panic alarm button been installed? Have you requested advice from local crime prevention officers?			
Paper documents			
Do you store your essential paper documents in fireproof cupboards? e.g. dispensed prescription forms / repeat dispensing batch issues.			
Are patient identifiable materials stored and disposed of securely?			
Do you have copies of essential files at a separate location?			
Equipment			
Do you have an asset register for your equipment?			
Have you completed a recent update of the inventory?			
Is there a back up copy of this register held off site?			
Do you maintain an up to date contact detail list of the providers of the equipment, including computers etc?			
IT			
Do you have a tested IT emergency recovery plan?			
Is your computer system's anti-virus software up to date? Do you have a firewall in place?			
Are documented IT security policies and procedures in place? Do all staff log on to the system with their own passwords?			
Is your PMR system backed up daily and the backup stored off site?			
Are any other PCs (including EPOS till systems) backed up daily and the backups stored off site?			
Have you validated your backups (consider using a validation service)?			
Do you know how long it would take to recover your IT systems?			

Location			
Have you considered risks associated with the environment (e.g. flooding, proximity of domestic premises etc)?			
Have you considered the risks due to the actions or operations of other businesses near you (e.g. sewage / chemical works and the associated risk of pollution)?			
Insurance			
Do you have sufficient insurance to pay for the disruption to your business, the cost of repairs, hiring temporary employees and leasing temporary accommodation and equipment?			

3. Service continuity planning assessment

This self-assessment questionnaire aims to act as a checklist to aid in the preparation and maintenance of your service continuity plan. If you have a local retailers forum / committee please discuss your service continuity plan with them, as, with the help and support of other retailers, you may be able to share resources in the event of an emergency. An alternative is to speak to local retailers directly. An individual plan is required for each potential emergency.

Existing plans	Yes	No	Need to check
Do you have a service continuity plan in place?			
Have you tested your plan within the last 12 months?			
Do you have a policy for when to activate your plan?			
Do you have regular and fixed review dates for your plan?			
Are your staff trained in activating your plan – staff should be involved in its development too.			
Is someone within your pharmacy nominated to have responsibility for the plan?			
Is the plan easily accessible to all your staff, including locum staff?			
Preparing plans			
Have you identified all the critical operations and resources needed to provide your services?			
Have you identified which services are business-critical and which can be suspended during an emergency?			
Have you carried out a risk assessment of those events or failures that may damage your business?			
Have you carried out a service impact analysis that assesses, in turn, the impact of losing any of your critical business operations or resources?			
Have you considered for each of those areas highlighted in your service impact assessment how long the business could operate without those resources and how quickly they could be replaced?			
Do you have your PMR information stored on backups that are held off site?			
Have you had this backup validated?			
Have you checked how quickly your suppliers could supply replacement servers and PCs and re-install your backup?			
How would you operate whilst waiting for this equipment? Consider pre-paring a manual system for recording patient information and dispensing records that could be used in the interim.			
Do you have backup arrangements for any other PCs, such as your financial records?			
Have you considered which essential medicines, medical equipment and disposables you will need to restart your business in temporary accommodation?			
If your building(s) were unusable, what other resources and equipment would you need to run the pharmacy from temporary accommodation? Have you included how you would acquire these in your plan?			
Have you considered, in turn, recovery plans for the loss of electricity, gas, water and telephone (broadband) supplies?			

Have you made a contact list of telephone numbers for all your key contacts? Is a copy of this stored off site?			
Do you have your insurance company's details and a copy of them off site, so that you can contact them immediately at the time of the emergency?			
Do you have telephone numbers for all your employees and their next of kin?			
Are staff aware of what can and cannot be done if the pharmacist is taken ill during the working day?			
Have you familiarised yourself and all your staff with the location of the mains switches and shut off valves for electricity, gas and water supplies?			
Have you prepared an emergency pack?			
Do you keep a copy of the pack off site?			

4. Emergency pack

Your emergency pack should include the essential items listed below. All these items should be stored in a waterproof and easily identifiable bag. The pack should be stored in a convenient and accessible place by all the members of your pharmacy team. An additional emergency pack should be retained off site by a known 'key' individual in case it is not possible to access the pharmacy.

- Copy of your service continuity plan
- List of employees with contact details and next of kin information
- Contact details of IT providers
- Contact details for pharmacy equipment and supplies providers
- Contact details for all utility suppliers
- Contact details for your insurance company
- Site plan for your building(s)
- Spare keys
- First aid kit

The additional items listed below should also be considered

- Torch and spare batteries
- Mobile telephone (charged and with credit)
- Dust masks and protective gloves
- Headed stationery, note pads and pens
- Disposable camera

Further Resources:

This guidance only refers to emergencies that affect the individual pharmacy business. Consideration also needs to be given as to how pharmacists and their staff will be involved in disaster planning. Further information on these areas can be found below:

General emergency planning

- PSNC LPC Briefing on emergency planning available at http://www.psn.org.uk/uploaded_txt/PSNC%20guidance%20-%20Emergency%20Planning.pdf

Pandemic / Avian flu:

- PSNC Contingency Planning for Pandemic Flu available at http://www.psn.org.uk/uploaded_txt/LPC%20BRIEFING%20FLU%20PANDEMIC.pdf. This lists a number of other resources
- DH guidance <http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/EmergencyPlanning/PandemicFlu/fs/en>
- Scottish Executive Health Department Pandemic Flu website <http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/nhsstaff/indexstaff.htm>

POTENTIAL TEMPLATE FOR SERVICE CONTINUITY PLANS:

Community pharmacies offer a wide range of important services to patients and the general public. Table 1 features a list of the services that this pharmacy provides in order of priority.

In the event of an emergency or service disruption this pharmacy will endeavour to maintain services at acceptable standards. Should this not become possible, the pharmacist on duty will decide which priority services must be continued and which can be reduced or suspended.

Any decisions made to reduce or stop services must be reported to the Lead Pharmacist in the PCO (insert relevant PCO contact)

Table 1 Example:

Dispensing service <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full dispensing service• Public Health service• Minor Ailment Service (Scotland only)
Repeat dispensing service
Medicines Use Reviews
Additional Services <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily dispensing and supervised administration of methadone / buprenorphine• Minor Ailment Service• Needle exchange• Services to Care Homes• Rota and Urgent Care• Compliance aids
Model schemes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over the Counter (OTC) sales

(Please add all the core and enhanced services you provide in priority related to patient need)

1. Loss of main pharmacy building

If the pharmacy building is uninhabitable for any reason the services will be provided in suitable alternative premises. If the pharmacy is located within a shopping precinct or mall, the alternative premises may need to be outside in case the entire area is affected. Any relocation requires approval by the RPSGB and by the PCO under the current NHS regulations governing the provision of pharmaceutical services.

The options open to this pharmacy are:

(insert the alternatives. These may include arrangements within the community; arrangements to hire Portakabins including where they would be located and how

facilities would be supplied; arrangements with other pharmacies / practices etc. If the building is not owned by the pharmacy then there may be a responsibility on the owner / landlord to provide alternative accommodation)

2. Failure of IT systems

Should the IT system or any stand alone computer fail, the staff will change to a paper back up system to capture important data so this can be recorded onto the electronic system retrospectively. Templates for recording information when the system is unavailable include and can be found

..... (Think of all the data that you input, where there is a need to capture this information while the system is unavailable, produce a template and have these available in a designated place. Also consider sales data if the tills are not working)

Labels

Labels will need to be hand written if these cannot be printed. A typewriter could be considered as backup. All required cautionary labels still need to be included.

Loss of hardware or software

If the pharmacy experiences loss of either a computer or software through theft or damage (insert designated post within pharmacy) will contact (insert systems provider help line and hardware supplier).

Protection of servers

During periods of extreme heat ensure that the server is maintained at a temperature that will not cause overheating and subsequent failure.

3. Failure of telecommunications

The telephone system is rented from (insert name of provider, BT etc, and contact) the lines are supplied by (insert name and contact details of network, BT etc and contact).

Any fault with the line should be reported to (insert name of network BT etc). If no line fault is identified then contact should be made with the system provider if different to network.

If the system is dependent on electricity, check the supply. If found to be an electrical problem, follow the instructions for loss of electricity.

If the land line fails, all incoming calls should be redirected to (insert designated mobile phone). This will require dedicated manning.

4. Failure of electricity supply

The electrical fuse box for this pharmacy is located (insert location of fuse box)

In the event of failure in the electricity supply, our supplier is (insert supplier) and their emergency contact number is (insert emergency contact).

The name and contact details of an emergency electrician are (insert name and contact details)

Emergency torches are stored in (it is recommended that you have a store of torches both hand and head mounted, with spare batteries)

Emergency generators can be obtained from (insert supplier)

In the event of a power failure, first check the trip switches in the fuse box. If this does not rectify the fault, contact the supplier and report the failure. For planning purposes, ask if they are able to give an estimated length of time the power will be off for.

A decision should be made as to whether the pharmacy business can be continued safely, or if relocation to an alternative site will be required to maintain the service.

Contact the PCO on (insert contact) to advise that you have a power failure affecting the pharmacy and what business continuity measures you are putting in place to maintain service.

If it is an electrical fault within the pharmacy contact (insert name and contact your chosen electrician or if the premises are rented this may be the landlord or owner).

The systems and appliances that may be affected during a power failure are:

- Lighting
- IT System
- Telephones (
- Heating and air conditioning
- Refrigerators
- Diagnostic equipment (
- Alarm systems

Each of the above will require specific consideration and you should follow the relevant plan for that system.

Clinical refrigerators – if failure is for a significant period, and likely to be detrimental to the contents, these should be checked and any temperature critical drugs relocated to (insert contingency arrangements) to ensure maintenance at

an optimum temperature. Try to minimise the need to open the refrigerator whilst the power is off in order to try and maintain the internal temperature. The NPA information department can provide information on stability of medicines stored outside recommended temperatures for various periods.

Heating - If heating loss occurs, assess the effect of the failure related to time of year and general overall temperatures, including forecast temperature. If it is felt that the pharmacy's business will be affected by loss of heating contact (if the premises are rented contact the landlord / owner to request they provide alternative heating), or if the premises are owned by the pharmacy contractor (insert contact of companies within the area who hire out portable heating appliances NB these will need to run off gas cylinders). Assess the risk to staff required to work in such conditions.

Computers - During a mains electrical failure please switch off the computers and EPOS tills to prevent damage from a power surge when the power is restored. This protection may already be built in to the system.

Diagnostic Equipment - If such equipment is entirely dependent on mains electricity, consider the implications of not being able to provide this facility as part of your normal service. If equipment has internal re-chargeable batteries, ensure you know the length of time the equipment can be used between charging periods. See Table 2

Table 2 (insert equipment)

Equipment	Internal Batteries Yes/No	If Yes duration/times it can be used

5. Failure of Gas supply

The gas shut off valve for the pharmacy is located (insert the location)

If there is a failure in the gas supply, contact (insert the emergency contact) to report the failure and to request if suppliers are able to give an estimate of the length of time it will be off in assisting with planning.

If heating is lost, assess the effect of the loss of heating related to time of year and general temperature, include forecast temperature. If it is felt that the pharmacy's business will be affected by loss of heating contact (If the premises

are rented contact the landlord / owner to request they provide alternative heating) or if premises are owned by the pharmacy contractor (insert contact of companies within the area who hire out portable heating appliances NB these will need to run off electricity). Assess the risk to staff required to work in such temperatures.

Insert contact details for CORGI-registered heating engineer or British Gas service contract number.

6. Failure of Water supply

The mains water supply shut off valve within the pharmacy is located (insert location), and the mains water stopcock external to the pharmacy is located (insert location).

The water supplier for this pharmacy is (insert name of supplier), and their emergency contact is (insert emergency number).

For internal plumbing emergencies contact (if the premises are rented this may be the landlord or owner and not the name and contact of your designated plumber. NB: make sure they can respond to emergencies or have cover when they are away)

In the event that water supply fails assess the impact on the practice. Consider:

- Toilets
- Hand Hygiene
- Drinking water
- Heating systems
- Reconstitution of medicines e.g. antibiotics

Toilets - If toilets are likely to be unavailable for a significant length of time arrange for alternative options, including access to facilities within the neighbourhood or arranging for the hire of portaloos (insert name and contacts of hire companies).

Hand Hygiene –ensure that self washing soaps are available e.g. Hand gels that do not require water

Drinking Water - Ensure that the pharmacy has a store of bottled drinking water (insert storage location) and water to reconstitute antibiotic mixtures for use in an emergency situation. (insert post) will be responsible for monitoring the expiry dates and replenishing stocks.

7. Fuel Shortages

In the event of a fuel shortage the ability to maintain services may be affected either by staff being unable to carry out services such as delivery of medicines , home visits, or being unable to travel to the pharmacy.

Each PCO will have a fuel crisis contingency plan, which will be integrated with the multi agency plans. The arrangements for obtaining fuel supplies in these circumstances should be communicated by the PCO.

8. Disruption to supplies

During a major emergency there may be interruptions in the supply of consumables and equipment required by the pharmacy. This may be a primary cause of an incident, i.e. a supplier factory fire, or disruption to the transport network such as in a fuel crisis.

In such an event, the (insert post) will be responsible for assessing the impact on the business of the pharmacy.

If there is a need to obtain supplies from another source the options are:

- Mutual aid from another pharmacy or the PCO.
- From the hospital pharmacy network co-ordinated by the PCO
- Contact another supplier. (list all your suppliers and alternative suppliers in annex A)

(Insert any mutual aid arrangements with other practices / PCT)

9. Fire

On discovering a fire or on suspicion of a fire i.e. smell of burning, smoke, smoke alarm etc, raise the alarm by (insert alarm operation) and call 999, clearly stating the full address of the premises and the type of emergency.

In the event of the fire alarm sounding this will be a (insert fire alarm sound and type i.e. siren/ bell continuous etc). All staff have a responsibility to evacuate the premises ensuring that all customers are assisted via the identified fire exits (see table 3). All persons will congregate at the fire evacuation assembly point (insert designated assembly point), where the (insert post title) will check that all persons have been evacuated.

If you suspect that there are persons still inside do not re-enter the premises.

On arrival of the Fire and Rescue Service (insert post) will greet them and give the following information:-

- Location of fire or suspected fire.
- Persons suspected of still being inside, with possible location

- Location of any inflammable materials
- Plan of interior of the premises (if available. It may help to have this available)

The exits are located:

Table 3

Area of premises	Nearest identified Exit

10. Staff Shortage

There may be occasions when individual staff members may be incapacitated for a variety of reasons. Their absence will have a varying effect depending on the role they are responsible for. In some cases these roles can be covered by other staff by ensuring that knowledge and skills are shared between groups of staff. Other roles may be highly specialised and cover will need more thought and planning especially if a service depends on that person alone.

There may also be the scenario when several members of staff are all incapacitated at the same time such as in an influenza pandemic situation or during severe adverse weather conditions.

On discovering that there will be a staff shortage inform (insert post) who will be responsible for assessing the impact on the business of the pharmacy and the contingency to be employed to maintain continuity of service.

Options available:

- The absence of staff for a short period does not have a significant impact on the business of the pharmacy – monitor the situation only.
- The absence of staff will have direct impact on the front line services/ business of the pharmacy, - divert workload to or between other staff that are capable of covering.
- The absence of staff will have a direct impact on the front line services/ business where there is no other employee who is able to cover the role(s). Seek appropriate bank / agency staff to cover.
- The impact of one or a number of staff being incapacitated is such that the pharmacy is unable to continue services - (insert post) will be responsible for assessing the capabilities of the pharmacy and possibly which services will be reduced (see list of services in priority above) or through mutual aid arrangements be diverted to other pharmacies. (If you are going to invoke

mutual aid arrangements with other pharmacies these will need to be pre-arranged, insert these arrangements) Withdraw non-essential services with agreement of the PCO / Head Office.

If there is any reduction in patient services, (insert post) will contact the PCO to inform the Lead Pharmacist's office on (PCO to insert contact) of the situation as soon as possible.

11. Mutual Aid Arrangements with other Pharmacies

(Insert arrangements with other pharmacies, including contacts)

12. Communicating with Customers

In the event that a business interruption is so severe that alternative arrangements for the provision of care need to be communicated to the customers of the pharmacy, this should be done in collaboration with the PCO.

In the event that support from the PCO is required in publicising the alternative arrangements (insert position) will contact (PCT insert contact) at the earliest opportunity to allow sufficient time to communicate changes to customers.

Where customers' prior awareness of contingency planning would be helpful to mitigate the effects of business interruption, the plan should be incorporated into a patient information leaflet for pick up by customers within the pharmacy.

It is important to keep customers informed of the situation during any period of business interruption; the aim of the pharmacy will be to reassure the customers with regular updates on the progress made in returning to normality.

Acknowledgement

Thanks go to

- NHS Clinical Governance Support Team
- Surrey PCO
- National Pharmacy Association

Annex A - Contacts List

Activation of the Plan

Primary	<i>(Position or Name)</i>	<i>(Contact Details)</i>
Deputy		

Staff Contacts

Name	Position	Contacts

(add rows as required)

PCO Contacts

Reason for contact	Department	Contacts
Emergencies		

Utilities / Services Contacts

Service	Provider	Contacts
IT systems		
Telecommunications		
Electricity		
Gas		
Water		

(add rows as required)

Tradesmen

Trade	Provider	Contacts
Electrician		
Plumber		
Heating Engineer		

Builder		
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(add rows as required, you may want to list more than one)

Other Pharmacies with whom we have mutual aid arrangements

Mutual aid available	Pharmacy	Contacts

(add rows as required)

Suppliers of products / drugs etc

Product	Supplier	Contacts

(add rows as required)